

How to Write a Conclusion Paragraph for a Research Paper

Instructions:

1. Understand the purpose of a conclusion paragraph. The essay's conclusion is your last chance to remind readers how the research in your paper has supported your thesis statement. The conclusion ties everything together and leaves the audience with the sense that a valid argument has been presented and supported by relevant research. **An effective conclusion allows the reader to reflect on the thesis statement after reading all supporting evidence you explained/provided in your body paragraphs.**
2. Reaffirm your thesis statement. A concluding paragraph is not the place to first introduce your thesis statement. That should be done in your introduction. However, it is important to restate your thesis in your conclusion. You want to remind the audience of the purpose of your paper. Do not repeat the thesis statement verbatim. Rephrase it in a new way while keeping the meaning of the original statement.
3. Go over the research from the body of your paper. In your conclusion, show the audience how the pieces of research fit together and work to support your thesis. Do not add completely new research to the concluding paragraph, but do reiterate the most important aspects of the research that your paper has already covered. In fact, be sure NEVER introduce NEW information in your conclusion.
4. Leave the audience with something to think about. End your essay on a memorable note. For example, show the audience how your topic influences their everyday lives or is important globally. Create a challenging question that asks readers to think about the implications of your paper's argument. Use a provocative quote from a research source used in the essay that sums up a point you want the reader to understand.

Tips & Warnings:

- It is important that the conclusion restates the ideas in the body of your paper. However, it is equally important that you find new ways to present the ideas. Do not simply cut and paste material from the body of your paper.
- The conclusion is no place to bring up new ideas. If a brilliant idea tries to sneak into your final paragraph, you must pluck it out and let it have its own paragraph earlier in the essay. If it doesn't fit the structure or argument of the essay, then leave it out altogether. The last thing you want in your conclusion is an excuse for your readers' minds to wander off into some new field and/or to finish reading your paper feeling as though they have more questions than answers. Allowing a peer editor or friend to reread your essay before you hand it in is one way to check this impulse before it ruins your good intentions and hard work.

Here is a brief list of things that you might accomplish in your concluding paragraph(s). There are certainly other things that you can do, and **you certainly don't want to do all these things.**

They're only suggestions:

- include a brief summary of the paper's main points.
- ask a thought-provoking question.
- use a quotation.
- evoke a vivid image.
- call for some sort of action.
- end with a warning.
- universalize (compare to other situations).
- suggest results or consequences.